



Wyoming Department of Education

Dr. Jim McBride, Superintendent of Public Instruction

2020 Grand Avenue, Suite 500

Laramie, WY 82070

Phone 307-777-5296

Fax 307-777-6719

Website www.k12.wy.us

MEMORANDUM NO. 2009-139

TO: District Superintendents
PAWS Coordinators
8th Grade Principals
8th Grade Counselors
High School Counselors

FROM: Julie Magee, Hathaway Scholarship Consultant
Sean Moore, Hathaway Scholarship Consultant

DATE: September 11, 2009

SUBJECT: Critical Timeline and Guidelines for the ACT EXPLORE Test for 8th Grade Students

TIME SENSITIVE IMPORTANT: PLEASE SHARE

During the 2009 legislative session, the Wyoming Legislature allocated \$50,000 to pay for the administration of the ACT EXPLORE test for all 8th graders enrolled in Wyoming public schools. This means that each district needs to plan on testing all of its 8th graders beginning this 2009-2010 school year. The Wyoming Department of Education (WDE) worked with ACT, Inc. to set up a testing window from October 1, 2009, through October 30, 2009. During this month, schools can set their individual test dates for students as they see fit.

ACT will conduct no formal training on the administration of the EXPLORE test. Testing procedures are straight forward and outlined in the EXPLORE Test Supervisor's Manual. Testing staff can download the EXPLORE Test Supervisor's Manual from the Wyoming Department of Education's website under the [Hathaway link](#).

In the manual, please note that **ACT allows for a one or two day test administration only.** The Department suggests that you discuss these options with your school or district administration, assessment staff, and faculty well in advance of your EXPLORE testing.

The **Student Information and other non-cognitive components of the test should be administered first**, followed by the academic tests (English, mathematics, reading, and science). Because of the time required to complete the non-cognitive portions of EXPLORE, some schools prefer to administer EXPLORE over a two-day period. In this case, **the non-cognitive portions should be administered on day one and the academic tests on day two.** If your schedule

allows, this option may increase the students' focus and minimize testing fatigue. However, care must be taken to ensure that students have the correct answer folder on day two. **In no case should the cognitive portion of EXPLORE be administered prior to the non-cognitive portion.** Doing so increases the risk of students filling in random bubbles on the test sections if they did not complete a section of the test or otherwise making extraneous marks that can affect scoring.

The graph below indicates test items and time.

ENGLISH TEST (40 items, 30 minutes testing time)		READING TEST (30 items, 30 minutes testing time)	
CONTENT/SKILLS COVERED BY TEST	NUMBER OF ITEMS	CONTENT/SKILLS COVERED BY TEST	NUMBER OF ITEMS
Usage/Mechanics	25	Prose Fiction	10
Punctuation	6	Humanities	10
Grammar and Usage	8	Social Sciences	10
Sentence Structure	11	TOTAL	30
Rhetorical Skills	15		
Strategy	5	SCIENCE TEST (28 items, 30 minutes testing time)	
Organization	5	CONTENT/SKILLS COVERED BY TEST	NUMBER OF ITEMS
Style	5	Data Representation	12
TOTAL	40	Research Summaries	10
		Conflicting Viewpoints	6
		TOTAL	28
MATHEMATICS TEST (30 items, 30 minutes testing time)		Note: The content areas (Earth/Space Sciences, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences) all are represented in the test; there are three units in the life sciences, two units in the physical sciences, and one unit in the Earth/Space sciences.	
CONTENT/SKILLS COVERED BY TEST	NUMBER OF ITEMS	Total number of EXPLORE test items = 128	
Pre-Algebra	10	Total testing time for four tests = 120 minutes	
Elementary Algebra	9		
Geometry	7		
Statistics/Probability	4		
TOTAL	30		
Other Key EXPLORE Components			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs Assessment—provides information about a student's perceived needs in seven areas. Plans and Background Information—addresses questions about high school coursework plans in five subject areas, educational and career plans after high school, and other demographic information. Exploring Career Options—helps students explore personally relevant career options based on UNIACT Interest Inventory results. Coursework Planner—provides guidelines to help students develop a high school coursework plan based on their EXPLORE test results and future educational and career plans. 			

If you have any questions about the ACT EXPLORE Test, please contact Julie Magee at jmagee@educ.state.wy.us or Sean Moore at smoore@educ.state.wy.us.

JM/SM:al